THE OLE DINNER BELL

There's music in the lowin' of the cattle on the hills,
An' in the lazy laughter of the waterfalls an' rills;
In the singin' of the bluebird an' the hummin' of the bee,
An' the ole woodpecker peckin' on the holler sugar tree.
There's music in the blossom an' the clear blue of the sky,
In the screamin' of the chicken hawk a'circlin' 'way up high;
But the sweetest songs of June time ain't nowheres near a smell
To the music 'long at noontime of the ole dinner bell.

When plowin' in the distant fields, clean out o' sight o' home,
A-wishin', too, with all your heart that dinner time would come,
You watch the furries stretch away aroun' the lower bend,
An' potter 'round a bit before you start for t'other end,
An' you bend your head an' listen to ketch the welcome sound,
An' calc'late it's purt nigh noon by shadders on the ground,
When through the hazy atmosphere, your longin' to dispel,
Comes the fur-off silv'ry music of the ole dinner bell.

When the harvest day is over an' the toilers' work is done,
Over wavin' corn an' clover tinted by the settin' sun,
Low an' sweet the distant music of the ole bell floats along;
Borne upon the evenin' breezes, mingled with the reapers' song,
An' you look across the medder, past the ole crick windin' through,
Where the ringer sweet is waitin' with a welcome there for you.
Oh, there ain't no joys of summer that can strike you quite so well,
As the ringin', when you're hungry, of the ole dinner bell.

—Edwin C. Davis, in the Indianapolis News.

The Point of View.

By Mabel Cronise Jones.

"ANYTHING the matter with you Jim?" And Ruth surveyed her brother keenly.

"No."

"What's the use of fibbing to me?" she demanded with sisterly frankness. "Something's gone wrong, I can see that clearly enough. Any trouble at the office?"

"No."

"Well," impatiently, "what is it, then? You always tell me things in the end, so you might as well go ahead and save me the trouble of dragging it from you."

Jim stared moodily out of the window and vouchsafed no reply.

"You've not quarrelled with Clarice, have you?"

A swift change in her brother's face told Ruth that she had touched on the truth, and she followed up her advantage promptly.

"That is it, I know. Now what was the fuss about?"

"There was no fuss and no quarrel, my sapient sister, only——"

"Go on, do!"

"I made a trifling error when I supposed she cared for me, that was all."

"Are you crazy, Jim? I am sure that Clarice cares for you. Don't jump at conclusions."

"I didn't jump at any conclusions, I assure you. I asked her to marry me, and she flatly refused."

"But why? why? why?" Ruth asked in honest bewilderment. "I know something of girls, and I am positive that Clarice cares for you."

"I had sometimes entertained such an idea myself, but you see that we both made a slight mistake."

"Don't be so maddening, Jim, dear; tell me all she said. I am awfully sorry for you, but I cannot help feeling that there is a mistake somewhere."

"Not much chance for it," Jim Rutherford said grimly; "she had fifty unanswerable arguments against marriage. She liked me, she was good enough to say, but she did not dare try the trials and tribulations of domestic life with any man. Servants were always leaving on a moment's notice, and generally, too, when the mistress was ill. She had seen so many men act like brutes on such occasions that she had not the courage to face it. I tried to laugh her out of the mood. I told her to ask you if I did not behave like an angel in all crises of that kind——"

"You really do," Ruth interposed warmly.

Jim nodded his thanks and then resumed his story with a discouraged air.

"It was all no use, for Clarice said that she had observed that men's natures changed after marriage, and that some who had been models of courtesy to their mothers and sisters were the embodiments of selfishness and inconsiderateness toward their wives."

"Well, of all things!"

"Oh, there was lots more of it, too, and she was in deadly earnest. I never saw her in such a mood. I had a good business, but I was not rich, and I would probably expect her to run the house and dress herself, too, on about five dollars a week—— Ruth, I say," breaking off suddenly with a pathetic appeal in his voice, "what do you suppose made her talk so?"

"I haven't the least idea. I've not seen Clarice for three or four days, but I cannot see how she could have altered so radically in so short a time. I am going to see her, though, before I am an hour older and find out the truth."

"I don't suppose that there is anything to find out. She seemed to know her own mind," Jim returned gloomily.

"Now that is just what she didn't do. It is no use for us to argue, Jim, but if I can find a grain of comfort for you, I will. The whole thing is beyond my comprehension."

When Ruth Rutherford (an alliterative name which the girl detested) was putting on her wraps preparatory to a belligerent call on her friend, she heard Clarice's voice in the hall below. She went down hurriedly to meet her.

"Come into the library," she said hastily, knowing perfectly well that Jim was in the room just beyond. "Now, I want you to give an account of yourself. What have you been doing to Jim? He is just about broken-hearted, for he believes all the nonsense you were talking to him yesterday. What did you mean by it, Clarice? You know that you think that Jim is kind and lovable and brilliant——"

"I don't——" Clarice flashed indignantly, although her voice trembled a little, "he is not brilliant at all! He is the most stupid man that ever lived!"

"Perhaps you will kindly explain," Ruth said coldly.

But this Clarice stubbornly refused to do, and it was not until Ruth put off her dignity and descended to tender coaxing that she drew the truth out of her friend.

"He—he came around yesterday morning—and I had been suffering for three days with an ulcerated tooth. I didn't have a wink of sleep during all of that time, and I was too great a coward to go to a dentist at first. Well, Jim came then, and of course my nerves were all on edge and the world looked blue and I was all unstrung, and I couldn't see anything in its proper perspective. Everything was distorted and out of proportion—oh, you understand how I felt——"

"Perfectly," said Ruth, with sympathetic comprehension.

"You called him brilliant just now, but it seems to me that even a man might have known better than to make a proposal of marriage at such a time. I thought at once of all the skeletons I had seen in married lives, and of every warning I had ever received from any one on the subject and—well—of course I would not listen."

"I should think not, indeed," Ruth said promptly. "I do not wonder that you called him stupid. I hope that tooth is all right now, Clarice, it has done mischief enough I should say."

"The tooth has been pulled and I have had a night's sleep, thanks."

"Then perhaps you would not object to hearing the story over—Jim," raising her voice, "I think that you may come in now."

Jim came, obedient to the summons, and Ruth, after a murmured "Bless you, my children," had the good taste to leave the room hastily.—Waverley Magazine.

When an Oil Lamp Was a Curiosity.

C. M. Shackelford, a Shelby County pioneer, was the first man to introduce oil in the county. Some time in the '50s he visited St. Louis and brought to Shelbyville two lamps and a couple of gallons of oil.

When the citizens of the village learned it there was considerable excitement—much more than when the electric lights were turned on a few years ago. About 400 people gathered at the store to watch Mr. Shackelford take his life in his hands. He loaded up the lamp, turned the wick and prepared for illumination by fastening a paper lighter on the end of a stick. The crowd looked uneasy, but didn't run, and the new lighting works was an entire success. Oil cost $3 per gallon. Mr. Shackelford bought some to introduce the improvement among his fellow citizens, but he only disposed of a gallon the following year.—Clarence (Mo.) Courier.

Insect Resembles a Beautiful Flower.

Living specimens of a queer insect have lately been shown in Cambridge, England. They were brought from Rangoon by Captain C. E. Williams. The insect is a species of mantis, and its body and legs are both shaped and colored to resemble a beautiful flower. It feeds on butterflies, and while it is lying in wait for them under a spray of leaves it looks exactly like a blue blossom with a black spot in the centre resembling the tube of a carolla. The black part of the body is drawn out into a long green stalk. The resemblance to a flower is perfect, and butterflies and other insects light on it in search of nectar and are immediately seized by its fatal claws.—Philadelphia Record.

Might Be Dangerous Here.

A sign of politeness in Tibet, on meeting a person, is to hold up the clasped hand and stick out the tongue.

The Art of Asking Questions

By Bernard Shaw

"DO not ask questions" is the worst piece of social advice which age can give to youth. A man who never asks questions is the dullest fellow in the world. He had better ask too many than too few. We can defend ourselves against curiosity, but no armor avails against indifference; we must resign ourselves to be bored to death.

What is the secret of the art of interrogation? Putting aside quick sympathies, which lie at the root of every social art, we believe the most essential quality for those who would excel in it is directness. The art of asking questions so as to learn, instruct, please and influence is not the art of beating about the bush. The questions which offend and silence are the questions which suggest some ulterior motive. It is a found-out scheme which makes men angry. Anything of the nature of a trap keeps us on our guard. If we fall into one, we resolve it shall be the last time; suspicion kills confidence. Interrogative hints are utterly useless. The average man does not dislike to be questioned; he hates to be startled, crossed, interfered with, reproached, wearied or betrayed. He hates the questions which are not asked with a simple intention.

There are questions which are asked not because the asker wants to know, but because he intends to tell. Others, while ostensibly directed to find out a man's opinion, are really intended to reflect upon his character. Some men inquire as to their neighbors' projects in order to put difficulties in their way.

We believe the conclusion of the matter to be this: The art of interrogation is a serious branch of the social art. Well-asked questions are of the essence of agreeable intercourse, but the interrogative mood will not justify an impertinence, an interference, a verbal assault—nor, for the matter of that, a bore.

The Sympathetic Woman

By Beatrice Fairfax

WHEN a man describes the quality he most admires in woman he paints a vivid word picture of one particular woman and puts in an impressionist background of women in general. He very often becomes conscious of the quality only after he has learned to know and love the woman, and he is quite likely to love some other woman for a totally different quality.

Poets will rhapsodize and philosophers will philosophize over the qualities they most admire, and when they meet the fortunate possessor of the said qualities they pass her indifferently by and fall at the feet of some woman who differs in every respect from their ideal.

From a woman's viewpoint woman's best quality is sympathy. The sympathetic woman is loved by men, women and children. Sympathy is essentially a womanly quality.

How we love her, the woman who when we pour out our tale of woe into her patient ears, puts herself in our place for the time being and finally sends us away with the feeling that there is at least one person who understands us.

The sympathetic woman is not always pretty or stylish or clever, but she is something better than all that, she is lovable. All men like and respect her and seek her society. She is restful and diffuses an atmosphere of untold peace and comfort. Just to go and sit near her is to find consolation.

She never bores because she always suits her moods to her friends and surely the sympathetic woman is the best of all women, for in order to be sympathetic she must possess all of the qualities that go to make woman lovable. —New York Journal.

Evening Play-Centres

The New York Board of Education's Experiments in Recreation

By Alice Katharine Fallows

THE New York Board of Education has already begun the experiment with a number of evening play-centres, some for girls and some for boys, in the ample basements of school buildings that used to stand idle while the street taught its lessons. Pushing open the door into one of these play-centres, the visitor meets a composite rush of sound like the roar of the ocean, and is confronted by a kaleidoscope of humanity, which gradually resolves itself in the figures, long and short, tidy and unkempt, Jew and Gentile, of a thousand boys gathered at long tables all up and down the big room, playing checkers, dominoes, crokinole and the other harmless games. Over in a corner a few little chaps are reading, or, with careful thought, selecting books from a small library.

In a room beyond, athletic boys in all sorts of humorous improvised costumes are preparing under their director for a contest with another team. Class rooms are occupied by intellectual boys, in the alphabet of whose desires A stands for American History or Author's Readings instead of Amusement or Athletics.

Owing to lack of funds, play-centres are still so few that only those over fourteen, who cannot be commanded to go to school in the daytime, are invited to attend. But this class it is particularly important to reach. New York, like most other cities, has offered for a long time, evening grammar schools and high schools, helpful and important in their way, but only attractive to the sober and earnest and industrious, to whom the temptations of the street are least alluring. Besides these is always to be found in the crowded districts a flotsam and jetsam of young population, too tired or indifferent to spend the evening in work, that drifts about until it finds its kind. Then comes the saloon or the dance hall, hot blood and swift purpose, and afterward mischief and lawlessness and the things done that should have been left undone.

For such the Board of Education's oases of wholesome play, open every night without money and without price, with no condition except those who enter must be over school age, are a deliverance from temptation—The Century.

Louisiana Purchase and the Territory It Brought

By Noah Brooks

THE upper portion of the Louisiana Purchase was known as the Territory of Louisiana; it comprised all that territory north of the thirty-third degree of latitude, eastward to the Mississippi and westward and northward as far as the undetermined boundaries of the newly acquired possessions might extend. South of this was the District of Orleans with its seat of government fixed at New Orleans. The cession of the upper part of the purchase did not take place until March 10, 1804, when, having received the cession from the Spanish, the French representative handed it over to the agent of the United States with a very brief and simple ceremony.

By these unimpressive proceedings the Government of the United States was put in possession of territory within whose bounds now flourish the States of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Idaho, Montana, the Indian Territory and parts of the States of Minnesota and Colorado. The men who were the active agents in the transfer of this mighty land from one national jurisdiction to another, are well-nigh forgotten in the crowd and rush of later, but not less important, events. By this historic purchase the seat of a mighty empire was forever established. By this purchase the possibilities of developing from the republic a world-power were strengthened. Under our benignant rule, comfort, luxury, prosperity, and even variety of material activity fill the wide spaces in which our fathers found only a trackless wilderness. Common gratitude bids us recall with acclaim the names of Jefferson, Livingston and Munroe, who, building better than they knew, made this magnificent transformation possible.—From "How We Bought the Great West," in Scribner's.

A HARP OWNED BY QUEEN MARY.

It Was Given as a Prize in a Competition Between Bards.

There was dispersed by auction in Edinburg on Saturday a family collection of Stuart and Jacobin relics of great historic interest and value. The early death of J. N. Durrant-Steuart, the twelfth and last Laird of Dalguise, in Perthshire, brought this unique collection to the hammer.

Interest centred mainly on two ancient harps, one known as Queen Mary's harp, and the other as the Lamont or Caledonian harp. For the last twenty years they have reposed in the National Museum of Antiquities, and are well known to Scottish antiquaries.

The story of Queen Mary's harp is that during a hunting trip into the highlands of Perthshire, in the year 1563, she offered her own harp as a prize in a bardic competition. It was awarded to Miss Beatrice Gurdyn, of Banchory. It closely resembles the famous harp of Brian Boru, and a century ago it was stringed and found to possess a sweet and delicate tone.

Competition for it was very keen. Theodore Napier, the well known Jacobite enthusiast, remained in the bidding until £840 was reached, and finally at £982 10s. it was secured by the authorities of the Edinburgh Antiquarian Museum.

The Lamont harp, which dates from the eleventh or twelfth century, was sold at £525.

A lock of hair from Prince Charles' head, and another from that of his wife, Princess Louise, of Stohlberg, went for £33 12s. A sword which he had worn was sold for £78. Highland dirks went at from £11 to £15 each, an Andrea Ferrara sword at £25, and two genuine old Highland targets at £58 10s and £60 18s.

Superstition in Sicily.

People of Sicily are vastly superstitious. The Sicilian believes, to give a few examples, in the existence of a double-tailed lizard which condescends to take in its mouth the winning numbers of the lottery. He believes it is unlucky to marry or begin a journey on a Tuesday or a Friday. He believes in the power of maledictions and of the evil eye, and attempts to defend himself against them by wearing amulets, such as the corno, a coral imitation of the horn of the goat, by spitting three times on the ground while pronouncing a magic formula, or, in certain districts, by invoking the name of Virgil, who somehow acquired, during the middle ages, a bizarre reputation as a magician. He believes in sorcerers, of whom a goodly number practice professionally on the island, selling to him, among other wonder working charms, grotesque colored images of St. Paul to be attached to barren fruit trees and barrels in which wine has soured. He believes that a person born on a Friday is able to predict the future and that a person born on June 29, the fete of St. Paul, who was unharmed by the viper which encircled his hand, is able to do both these these things and to charm serpents besides.

Fish and Dog Story From Kentucky.

John T. Parish, of the Holland country, says he has a dog that can catch more fish and better fish than any man. He says that when he arises in the morning, if he feels that he would relish a fish for breakfast, he makes his wants known to his dog, and in a very short time a nice fish is in the frying pan.

Mr. Parish lives near the river, and he says he has erected a little platform on the edge of the water for his dog's use and benefit. He says the dog will perch himself on this platform and watch for his game. When a nice fish that he likes the looks of comes near enough he dives from his perch and never fails to make a catch. During shoaling time he frequently catches two fish at a time.

Mouth Breathing.

Mouth breathing is more than a habit; it is an evidence of deformity or disease in the upper air passages. A child never breathes through his mouth from choice. He does so either because the passages of the nose are obstructed or because his tonsils are enlarged, and he cannot be taught to breathe naturally so long as the obstruction remains. In some instances the interference with respiration is due to a deformity of the chambers of the nose, but in a majority of cases it is caused by the presence of adenoids in the pharynx. Enlargement of the tonsils may be associated with either of these conditions, or it may exist alone.—Youth's Companion.

What the Texas Farmer Forgot.

A story is going the rounds regarding a farmer who is greatly troubled with absent mindedness. On the way home from town, so the story goes, the thought came to him that he had forgotten something. He took out his notebook, went over every item and checked it off. He saw that he had made all the purchases that he had intended. But as he drove on he could not put the feeling aside. When he arrived home and drove up to the house his daughter came to meet him, and with a look of surprise asked: "Why, where is ma?"